



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

A GARLAND OF BALLADS

BY PHILLIPS BARRY

THE ballad is, the world over, a tale of common things. Simple events in human experience are its subjects. It is not surprising, then, that many themes are quite old; that some, moreover, are universal. The error in judgment lies in assuming that actual borrowing, or even direct transmission, are the only causes of the provenience, in different localities, of ballads constructed upon variants of the same theme, or of the recurrence of the same theme in ballads of different date, native to the same country. If in a given instance borrowing seems probable, there is always an even chance that we should decide upon coincidence as the true explanation, and *vice versa*. Whereas "Sir Aldingar" and "Earl Brand," as appears from the retention of obviously Scandinavian names, are quite evident relics of the Danish conquest, it is yet quite likely that "The Douglas Tragedy,"¹ though based on a theme identical with that of "Earl Brand," may have its only source in an event of Scottish tradition.

Too long, in fact, has the later British ballad, the so-called "vulgar literary" or "broadside" ballad, lain neglected and despised. Its literary worthlessness, of course, no one denies. Yet, aside from its value as throwing light on the vexed question whether the "ballad style," according to the principles laid down by Professor Gummere,² is in all cases an original or an acquired peculiarity of the "good" ballads,³ it is worthy also of our attention in determining the origin and dispersion of ballad themes. Professor Child understood this, and unhesitatingly accepted "The Suffolk Miracle" as "the representative in England, of one of the most remarkable tales, and one of the most impressive and beautiful ballads of the European continent." So also to the later British ballad we owe the preservation of several forms of the Returned-Lover motif. In none of these instances however, can we say with any certainty whether or not the broadsides have preserved for us any traces of lost traditional, never-

¹ "Earl Brand," B., Child, *English and Scottish Popular Ballads*. See also the version recorded by me from an American folk-singer ("The Ballad of Earl Brand," ed. by Phillips Barry, *Modern Language Notes*, xxv, 4, pp. 104-105).

² F. B. Gummere, *The Popular Ballad*.

³ It is a fact substantiated by good evidence, that certain of the later British ballads have, in traditional versions whose ultimate source is the printed archetype of the broadside press, devoid of the ballad style characteristic of the ancient, i. e., "popular" or "communal" ballad, actually developed the same ballad style to a greater or less degree, as one of the several re-creative effects of long-continued traditional singing. For instance, "The Wittam Miller" (*Roxburghe Ballads*, viii, 68, 176, 629) appears thus re-created in "Pretty Oma," as sung by American folk-singers.

recorded ballads. There is nothing to show that such ballads existed.

Yet it seems not to have been generally observed that themes known to ancient balladry reappear, sometimes almost unaltered, in later ballads. Nor are these later ballads, with the exception of "The Squire of Edinborough Town," — a broadside-disseminated Irish version of "Katherine Jaffray,"¹ — actual versions of the ancient ballad, tricked out with the tawdry finery of Grub Street. Some connection they may have with the ancient ballad, however. It would not be incredible that a Seven-Dials Homer should have the effrontery to rewrite the story of "Earl Brand" in his own words. Yet, as we cannot be sure of either "borrowing" or "coincidence" as a working theory infallible in the case of the ancient ballads, the same is true in the present instance. The event which furnishes the theme might recur at any time. "Lord Randall," for example, is based on a theme in which, historically speaking, the victim might as well have been the Emperor Claudius or King John as the unknown Randall.

A few words may here be said relative to certain themes common to the ancient and later ballad.

I. ERLINTON

(Theme: Unwelcome suitor, elopement, pursuit.)

This theme was taken up by the broadside writers at an early date. The oldest traceable treatment of it is in "The Masterpiece of Love-Songs,"² the plot of which is thus outlined by the author: —

"A Dialogue betwixt a bold Keeper and a Lady gay,
He woo'd his Lord's Daughter, and carried the day,
But soon after Marriage was forc'd for to fight,
With his Lord and six Gentlemen, for his own Right,
He cut them and hew'd them, and paid them with blows,
And made them his Friends, that before were his Foes."

To the later, accordingly, rather than to the earlier ballad, is the following version to be referred.

THE SOLDIER³

1. I'll tell you of a soldier,
Who lately came from war,

¹ Broadside by Such (Brit. Mus., Bks. 3, g. 4, vol. iii, p. 39). Traditional versions, ultimately derived from the broadside, are still current. I have recorded two from Irish singers.

² Licensed and Entered, London. Printed for A. M. W. O., and Tho. Thackeray, at the Angel in Duck-Lane. Brit. Mus., c. 22, f. 14, p. 20-vo, cf. *Roxburghe Ballads*, vi pp. 229-231.

³ "The Soldier," A, *Folk-Songs of the North Atlantic States*, as derived from L. A., Camden, N. J., by MS. of I. L. M., Vineland, N. J.

- A courting a lady,
 Both wealthy and fair.
 Her portion was so great,
 It scarcely could be told,
 But yet she loved the soldier
 Because he was so bold.
2. She says, "My dearest jewel,
 I fain would be your wife,
 But my father is so cruel,
 I fear he'll end my life."
 He took his sword and pistol,
 And hung them by his side,
 He swore he would marry her,
 Whatever might betide.
3. To church they went,
 And returning home again,
 Her father met them
 With seven armed men.
 "Oh, dear!" says the lady,
 "I fear we shall be slain." —
 "Fear nothing, my jewel!"
 The soldier said again.
4. Then up speaks the father,
 With a great frown he said,
 "'T is this your behavior,
 To me this very day,
 Since you have been so silly
 To be a soldier's wife,
 Here in this lonesome valley,
 I'll end your pleasant life!"
5. Then up speaks the soldier,
 "I do not like this prattle!
 Although I am a bridegroom,
 I am prepared for battle."
 He took his sword and pistol,
 He caused them forth to rattle,
 The lady held the horse,
 While the soldier fought the battle.¹
6. The first one he came to,
 He quickly had him slain,

¹ Compare "The Masterpiece of Love-Songs:"

"Come on, quoth the Keeper, 't is no time to prattle,
 I see by your swords, you're prepar'd for battle.
 With his sword and buckler he made them to rattle,
 The Lady did hold the horse for the Keeper."

The next one

He ran him through amain,
"Let's flee," cried the rest,
"Or we all shall be slain,
To fight with this brave soldier
Is altogether vain."

7. "Oh, stay your hand!" the old man cried,
"It makes my blood run cold,
I give you up my daughter,
Five thousand pounds in gold!" —
"Fight on!" says the lady,
"Your portion is too small," —
"Oh, stay your hand, kind soldier,
And you shall have it all!"¹

8. He took the soldier home,
Acknowledged him his heir,
'T was not because he loved him,
But 't was for dread and fear.
There never was a soldier,
Who was fit to carry a gun,
That would ever flinch, or start an inch,
Until the battle's won.

9. Despise not a soldier
Because he is poor,
He is as happy in the field of war
As at the bar of door,
He's merry, brisk, and lively,
Brave, sociable, and gay,
And as ready to fight for love
As for his liberty.

II. YOUNG BEICHAN

(Theme: Captive-lover.)

"Stories and ballads of the general cast of 'Young Beichan' are extremely frequent."² Even the familiar tradition of Pocahontas and Capt. John Smith is not very far removed from this theme. A later British ballad, in this instance, probably an actual rewriting of some version of "Young Beichan" by a metre-ballad-monger, is still current.

¹ Compare "The Masterpiece of Love-Songs: "

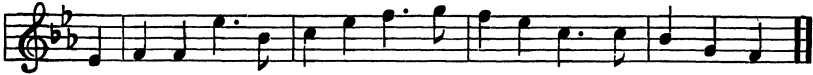
"O then, quoth the Lord, bold Keeper, hold thy hand,
If you'll give your daughter thirty thousand in land,
You shall not dye by the hand of the Keeper.

Keeper, quoth the Lady, 't is too small a portion.
Peace, quoth the Lord, daughter, let your will be done.'

² F. J. Child, s. v. "Young Beichan."

THE TURKISH LADY¹

Young vir-gins all, I pray draw near, A pret - ty sto - ry you shall hear,



'Tis of a Turk-ish la - dy brave, Who fell in love with an Eng-lish slave.

1. Young virgins all I pray draw near,²
A pretty story you shall hear,
'T is of a Turkish Lady brave,
Who fell in love with an English slave.
2. A merchant's ship at Bristol lay,
As they were sailing o'er the sea,
By a Turkish rover took were we,
And all of us made slaves to be.
3. They bound us down in irons strong,
They whipped and lashed us along,
No tongue can tell, I'm certain sure,
What we poor souls did endure.
4. Come sit you down and listen awhile,
And hear how Fortune did on me smile,
It was my fortune for to be,
A slave unto a rich lady.
5. She dressed herself in rich array,
And went to view her slaves one day,
Hearing the moan this young man made,
She went to him, and thus she said, —
6. "What countryman, young man, are you?" —
"I am an Englishman, that's true." —
"I wish you was a Turk," said she,
"I'd ease you of your misery.
7. "I'll ease you of your slavish work,
If you'll consent to turn a Turk,
I'll own myself to be your wife,
For I do love you as my life."

¹ "The Turkish Lady," A, *Folk-Songs of the North Atlantic States*. Melody from MS. of O. F. A. C., Harrisburg, Pa.

² From *The Forget-me-not Songster*, Nafis and Cornish, New York (c. 1845), p. 169.

8. "No, no, no," then said he,
"Your constant slave, madam, I'll be,
I'd sooner be burnt then at the stake,
Before that I'll my God forsake."
9. This lady to her chamber went,
And spent that night in discontent,
Little Cupid with his piercing dart,
Had deeply wounded her to the heart.
10. She was resolved the next day,
To ease him of his slavery,
And own herself to be his wife,
For she did love him as her life.
11. She dressed herself in rich array,
And with the young man sail'd away,
Unto her parents she bid adieu,
Now you see what love can do.
12. She is turn'd a Christian brave,
And is wed to her own slave,
That was in chains and bondage too,
By this you see what love can do.¹

III. THE CRAFTY FARMER

(Theme: Biter bit.)

A typical broadside ballad constructed upon this theme is the following:—

THE YORKSHIRE BITE²

In Lon - don there liv - ed a ma - son by trade, He
D.C. A York - shire boy he had for his man, And

had for his ser - vants a man and a maid.
for to do his busi - ness,— his name it was John.

Fol de lol, fol de lol, Whack, fol de did - dle, all the day.

¹ From *The Forget-me-not Songster*, Nafis and Cornish, New York (c. 1845), p. 169.

² "The Yorkshire Bite," A, *Folk-Songs of the North Atlantic States*, communicated by H. J. C., Boston Mass.

1. In London there lived a mason by trade,
He had for his servants a man and a maid,
A Yorkshire boy he had for his man,
And for to do his business, — his name it was John.
Fol de lol, fol de lol,
Whack fol de diddle all the day.
2. So early Monday morning, his master called for John,
Jack, hearing his master, he quickly did come,
: : : : : : : : : :
: : : : : : : : : :
3. Johnny took the cow out of the barn,
And drove her to the Fair, as we do learn,
While on his way there, he met with a man,
And he sold him his cow for five pound ten.
4.
.
While he was picking up the money Jack had lost,
To make his amends, Jack ran off with his horse.
5. Then home to his master Jack he did bring,
Horse, saddle and bridle and many fine things,
They took off the saddle bags, as it was told,
Five thousand pounds of silver and gold.
6. Besides a pair of pistols, and Jack says, "I vow,
I think, my good old master, I've sold well your cow."
: : : : : : : : : :
: : : : : : : : : :
7. "As for a boy you have done very rare,
And half of this money you shall have for your share,
And as for the villain, you've served him just right,
To think you put upon him a Yorkshire bite."¹

In the matter of this widespread theme, the following interesting tradition is worthy of record.²

ANECDOTE OF REV. IVORY HOVEY

A strange story is related concerning Rev. Ivory Hovey, who was settled in Manomet Ponds, April 18, 1770, and continued pastor of this ancient church until Nov. 4, 1803, when, as their records say, Mr. Hovey died, aged 89 years, to the great grief of his people. Many

¹ The Yorkshireman's shrewdness in driving a sharp bargain is proverbial.

² Copied from a scrap-book compiled by A. J., Newbury Center, Vermont, before 1870.

of his descendants still live in South Plymouth, and the writer has taken much pains to ascertain the facts connected with the singular story to which allusion has been made. Molly Bly, who was long a domestic and faithful friend in the family of Mr. Hovey, is still remembered by various individuals in the church as a woman of God, and she is said to have told the story often, with much feeling, as related to her by the venerable divine himself.

His grandfather, who resided in England, was in moderate circumstances, but he loved the Savior, and had an earnest desire that a son whom God had given him should become a minister of the Gospel. Such, however, were his limited means, that he could not educate his son for this sacred office. In these days of solitude, he is said to have been assured in a dream that a grandson should enter the ministry, and labor for his Master. It chanced that on the occasion of building a barn, he sent his son, the father of Rev. Ivory Hovey, to the nearest village to purchase nails. While returning home, as he was riding on horseback through a piece of woods, his saddle-bags being pretty well stored with nails, he was met by a highwayman, who ordered him to deliver up his saddle-bags of money.¹ Mr. Hovey determined that some pains should be taken by this unwelcome intruder, and hastily threw the supposed treasure over the hedge² which bordered the roadside. The robber sprang from his horse³ to secure the prize, when Mr. Hovey, leaving his own more tardy animal, sprang into the empty saddle, and hastily drove homeward.⁴ The highwayman called loudly to Mr. Hovey to stop, declaring that he was only in jest; but the latter, replying, "I am in earnest,"⁵

¹ Compare "The Crafty Farmer" (*Child*, 283, A):

9. As they were riding along,
The old man was thinking no ill,
The thief he pulled out a pistol,
And bid the old man stand still.

² Compare:

10. But the old man proved crafty,
As in the world there's many,
He threw his saddle o'er the hedge,
Saying, "Fetch it, if thou 'lt have any!"

³ Compare:

11. The thief got off his horse,
With courage stout and bold,
To search for the old man's bag,
And gave him his horse to hold.

⁴ Compare:

12. The old man put's foot i the stirrup,
And he got on astride,
To its side he clapt his spur up,
You need not bid the old man ride.

⁵ Compare:

13. "Oh, stay!" said the thief, "Oh, stay!
And half the share thou shalt have!" —
"Nay, by my faith!" said the old man,
"For once I have bitten a knave!"

drove forward, and, on arriving home, found the saddle-bags of his new-found horse well filled with filthy lucre.¹

This God-sent treasure was preserved with much care, and with it Rev. Ivory Hovey was educated for the ministry.

A parallel prose tradition exists in the case of some ballads.² There is no reason to question the truth of the anecdote, — encounters with highwaymen were common enough, — yet the closeness with which it follows the narrative of "The Crafty Farmer" is suspicious. Some version of the ballad, stored perhaps in Molly Bly's memory, has doubtless colored the story. We may with right, therefore, speak of a traditional ballad-mythology, stereotyped ornamentations and details, suited to certain events.

Other examples might be put in evidence, but lack of space forbids giving them more than passing mention. The grusome story of "Lizie Wan" (*Child*, 51) reappears in later balladry as "The Bloody Brother."³ Two familiar Irish come-all-ye's — "Johnny Doyle" and "The Constant Farmer's Son" — are exact counterparts, respectively, of "Lord Salton and Auchanachie" (*Child*, 239) and "The Braes of Yarrow" (*Child*, 214). In a word, the origin and transmission of ballads and ballad themes may not in any two given instances be the same, or due to the same causes. The subject is large, and calls for more extended research.

THORNTON, N. H.

¹ Compare:

17. He opened the rogue's portmanteau,
It was glorious to behold,
There were three hundred pounds in silver,
And three hundred pounds in gold.

² Compare "Lady Isabel and the Elf-Knight" (in *Child*, iv, p. 496), also "King John and the Bishop," as recorded by me in this *Journal*, vol. xxi, pp. 58-59.

³ *Forget-me-not Songster*, p. 247.